



National Security
Personnel System

Employee



Communicating with Your Supervisor



New missions, tactics and technology are changing the work of the total force. These changes mandate the realignment of the civilian workforce to better support DoD's mission. Moving to NSPS requires building a performance-focused environment where employees and supervisors alike are held accountable for doing work that aligns with organizational goals and the DoD mission.

To support the interests of the United States in today's national security environment – where unpredictability is the norm and greater agility is the imperative – you must be an integrated, flexible and responsive part of the team. Talk with your supervisor about how you can both individually and organizationally respond to your organization's mission requirements. This brochure explains:

- The benefits of communicating with your supervisor about NSPS.
- Key topics to discuss with your supervisor.
- Communications skills needed to succeed in NSPS.



Why *Talk With Your Supervisor?*

For you and your organization to successfully transition to NSPS, you must be able to communicate openly with your supervisor.

NSPS provides a powerful opportunity for you to actively engage in frequent communication with your supervisor about your accomplishments, current work and future goals.

As you prepare for NSPS, your supervisor will be a valuable source of information and guidance.

It is imperative that you understand why DoD is moving to NSPS and what you need to do to succeed. It is important for you to discuss any questions or concerns you have with your supervisor.

What **Topics** *to Discuss*

Arrange a time to meet with your supervisor to discuss the following topics.

New Opportunities – Safeguarding Employee Rights and Protections

NSPS offers managers and supervisors an improved system for acknowledging employees who achieve their performance goals through individual and team contributions. Discuss with your supervisor concerns you may have regarding safeguards in the performance management system. NSPS provides you with new opportunities for pay increases, rewards and career progression, while ensuring your rights, protections and current benefits.

Career Goals and Interests

Through NSPS, DoD is shifting from narrow job classes that rely on subtle distinctions among closely related types and levels of work to broad career groups. NSPS provides a streamlined method of classifying positions based on work, mission, career path and competencies. Discussing and documenting your career path and progression enables your supervisor to take your goals into consideration when assigning future work. When you discuss your desired career path with your supervisor, he or she can help explain your organization's mission and the available opportunities it creates for your group and you.

Employee



Focus on Performance Planning

The move to NSPS includes a shift in the way DoD organizations evaluate and compensate performance. Your focus is on your performance and how you contribute to your organization. Success under NSPS is linked to how well you perform and how that performance contributes to the success of the organization.

Work with your supervisor to establish performance objectives that show you how to meet the goals inherent in your work assignments. It is important that you:

- Understand the established performance criteria and continuously monitor and routinely track your progress in meeting your goals;
- Meet regularly with your supervisor to discuss your performance and ensure your goals and criteria are up to date; and
- Document the results and outcomes of your work that support the organization's goals.

Work Assignment and Accountability

You work hard at your job every day. Because NSPS links employee compensation to performance, it is essential that you and your supervisor share a common understanding about your performance and results, and how your day-to-day activities contribute to mission accomplishment.

Make sure that you know what you are accountable for, what the short- and long-term priorities are and how the work you do contributes to the success of your organization. If you have not already done so, make it a point to meet with your supervisor on a regular basis. Frequent and honest communication is key to your success under NSPS.

Skill Development and Learning Opportunities

Adding new skills and expanding areas of knowledge increases your value to the organization and enables you to take advantage of new job opportunities. Meet with your supervisor to identify skill-building opportunities and work together to set up a development plan that enhances your value to the organization and maximizes your potential for career progression.

How to **Communicate**

Remember the following guidelines as you get ready for NSPS.

Offer Constructive Feedback

As organizations implement NSPS, your feedback can drive improvement. Feedback is a good thing. Communicating your viewpoint to your supervisor in a constructive way helps improve the system in the long run. Remember these tips for constructive feedback:

- *Be prepared.* Formulate an effective comment or recommendation; make sure your issues and points are formed properly and well stated so your supervisor can understand your views. Be candid and state facts, not feelings.
- *Be a part of the solution.* Your ideas matter! When you discuss NSPS with your supervisor, include ideas on how your organization can prepare for and improve under NSPS.
- *Continue the dialog.* As you prepare for implementation, keep talking with your peers and supervisor about NSPS and performance. This open communication is crucial to you and your organization's success.
- *Use appropriate feedback channels.* There are several ways to provide feedback (e-mail, anonymous drop-boxes, websites, etc.). Ask your supervisor for the best way to convey your thoughts in order to maximize your impact.

Ask for Feedback

Do not be afraid to ask your supervisor how you are doing. You want to know what you are doing well and areas where you can improve. When you receive feedback about:

- *What you are doing well* – take time to consider how you can apply what is working to your other responsibilities.
- *Areas for improvement* – try not to be defensive. Instead, ask for specific examples of how you need to improve and clarify any questions and concerns you may have.

Take a moment to jot down the outcome of your feedback so you have a record of it, and you can use the information later when you are preparing for your formal appraisal.



*National Security
Personnel System*

For More Information

NSPS

Visit the NSPS website – A comprehensive and up-to-date resource:

<http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps>

NSPS in Your Component

Visit the Air Force at:

<http://www.dp.hq.af.mil/dpp/dppn/nsps/index.cfm>

Visit the Army Civilian Personnel On-Line at:

<http://www.cpol.army.mil>

Visit the Fourth Estate at:

<http://hrd.whs.mil>

Visit the Navy Knowledge Online at:

<https://wwwa.nko.navy.mil>